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Broadcast by Clergyman, Accused of Killing Jews, Is Drawing Criticism

Associated Press

A clergyman accused of taking part in the killing of 4,000 Jews in World War II was given air time on the government-financed Radio Free Europe, triggering demands for the resignation of a White House aide who defended the broadcast.

At issue is an interview last May 1 with Romanian Orthodox Bishop Valerian Trifa, whom the U.S. government is trying to strip of his citizenship and deport. The interview was aired even though the Justice Department asserts that "this individual was part of the fascist anti-Semitic



TRIFA

Iron Guard" in Romania during World War II. The occasion for the 45-minute interview was the 50th anniversary of Trifa's Michigan church.

Martin Mendelsohn, a Justice Department official, said Radio Free Europe must have been aware of Trifa's background when it interviewed him. Now, the Justice Department is demanding to know why the interview took place.

Caught in the middle is White House aide Paul Henze.

When the dispute arose at a meeting in August, he said it "certainly isn't serious from the White House point of view."

But Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman, D-N.Y., doesn't see it that way.

Last week, in a letter to President Carter, Holtzman, who heads a House subcommittee on immigration, demanded Henze's "immediate removal from your staff."

Henze works for national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski.

"If his (Henze's) comments accurately reflect the position of, or were sanctioned by, Dr. Brzezinski or other White House officials, they too should be called to account," Holtzman said.

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